

How to Backup Your Files to a CD or a Flash Drive

Windows XP and Windows Vista have the ability to write files saved to the hard drive of your computer to a recordable CD (CD-R). Most newer computers have a CD recordable (CDRW) or a DVD recordable (DVD/RW) drive installed.

Step 1 – Verify the size of the files to be saved:

1. Click on the Start Button at the lower left of the screen.
2. Click on My Computer (Computer in Vista).
3. You should see icons of document folders for each user of your computer as well as your hard disk drive (Local Drive C), icons for all of your CD/DVD drives, and any other devices that can be written to such as memory card readers and flash drives.
4. Right click on your document folder and then from the menu that comes up, left click on Properties. The screen that displays will show the total size of all files in your document folder including all subfolders. (My Pictures and My Music are subfolders in the My Documents folder. Backing up My Documents will include a backup of pictures and music).
5. Compare the size of the My Documents folder to the capacity of the device you want to use to store your backup. Typically a CD-R can hold about 700 million bytes (70000K bytes). Files can be added to a CD-R that already contains some saved files. If the total size of the My Documents folder is greater than the amount of space available on the backup device, you will either have to use a different backup device or break the backup into smaller parts.

Step 2 – Back the files up to a CD-R or a Flash Drive:

1. Click on the Start Button at the lower left of the screen.
2. Click on My Computer (Computer in Vista).
3. Right click on your document folder on the start menu.
4. Move the pointer to Send To on the menu that appears. Don't be misled by the term 'Send To', the files are not transferred to the backup device, copies sent to the device. The originals are still in your document folder.
5. On the menu that then appears, click on the drive letter that represents the CD/DVD-RW drive or Flash Drive.
6. If you choose a CD-R to write to, a balloon at the lower right of the screen will appear telling you that you have files waiting to be written to CD. **Click the balloon.**
7. On the dialog box that appears, click on "Write These Files to Disk". The CD Writing wizard begins. First you can create a name for the CD. Then click next until the writing process begins. When the file is successfully written to the CD, the CD will be ejected from the drive. That's the indication that the file has been written.
8. If you choose a flash drive, the files will begin to copy to the flash drive.

